



United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mountain-Prairie Region

Date: July 7, 2005

REGIONAL DIRECTOR'S ORDER NO. 5

Subject: Regional Telework Policy

Sec. 1. What is the purpose of this Order? This Order provides Region 6 guidance for implementing the Department's telework policy.

Sec. 2. To whom does this Order apply? This order applies to Region 6 employees.

Sec. 3. What are the authorities for taking this action? Department of the Interior Personnel Bulletin No. 05-02, Telework Policy, dated February 18, 2005. The Department's bulletin supersedes the current U.S. Fish and Wildlife Manual 226 FW 4, Flexible Workplace, dated May 3, 1995. Region 6 policy may be supplemented upon issuance of a new FWS Manual Chapter.

Sec. 4. What is telework? The telework program allows eligible employees to work at an alternate worksite, including at their home, on a regular or recurring basis (core telework), or on an occasional basis (situational telework) basis.

Sec. 5. What positions are covered by this policy? Eligible positions are those with duties that can be performed away from the official duty station without affecting customer service, and that would maintain supervisory oversight.

Sec. 6. Are all employees eligible for telework? All employees whose performance and conduct are satisfactory or better and occupy a position as defined in Section 5 above, are eligible for telework.

Sec. 7. Why should a supervisor consider an employee for this program? In addition to meeting the requirements of Public Law and the Department's policy, offering telework enhances retention of workforce, accommodates employees with disabilities or continuing health problems, and reduces transportation costs, commuting time, and environmental impacts, thus, providing a better quality of life.

Sec. 8. How does an eligible employee participate in the telework program? Employees should contact their immediate supervisor to discuss the possibility of

telework and the compatibility of the position with the parameters and intent of the program.

Sec. 9. What considerations are made when determining participation in the telework program? Such issues as cost, job type, and employee's work performance should be considered before approving and/or participating in the telework program. Refer to the attached DOI Personnel Bulletin 05-02 for further guidance on an employee's participation in the telework program.

Sec. 10. How is participation in the program documented? **First**, if the supervisor determines that telework is appropriate, it is the supervisor's responsibility to document the telework arrangement in the form of a telework agreement (see attached agreement). The agreement should specify the terms and conditions of program participation, the performance expectations, and the work schedule information for the individual employee. **Second**, the supervisor must ensure that the employee has completed and signed the safety checklist (see Section 14 of this Order). **Third**, the supervisor must provide the employee with a copy of DOI Personnel Bulletin 05-02; it is the employee's responsibility to read and be familiar with the guidance.

Sec. 11. Who has approval authority for the telework participation? With concurrence of the program Assistant Regional Director (ARD), first-level supervisor may approve participation in the telework program by signing the agreement and documenting participation as described in Section 10 above.

Sec. 12. Can a supervisor deny or terminate a telework agreement? An agreement must be denied if an employee has documented performance deficiencies or is on a leave restriction. The agreement must be terminated if the employee's performance falls below satisfactory, customer service is adversely affected, leave restrictions become necessary, conduct problems occur, or other requirements of the agreement are not met. Supervisors should contact the Human Resources Office for assistance. Telework is NOT an employee's right, and approval or termination is within the supervisor's discretion. Additionally, on a quarterly basis, supervisors should review the effectiveness of the program with a participating employee. This review must be documented and maintained by the supervisor.

Sec. 13. What is the maximum number of days an employee can work at the alternative worksite? For **core** telework, it is the Region 6 policy to allow up to four days in a pay period, with an understanding that the employee will be available to interact with supervisor, coworkers, and customers. **Situational** telework will be handled on a case-by-case basis, and the number of days will depend on the circumstances surrounding the request for telework.

Sec. 14. Will entitlements such as pay, leave, or travel differ for employees on telework? Generally, the provisions are the same as those at the official duty station; however, supervisors should consult the DOI Personnel Bulletin 05-02, as well as contact Human Resources, when unusual circumstances arise.

Sec. 15. What if an employee is injured at home while participating in telework?

Telework employees are covered under the Federal Employees Compensation Act. Telework employees working at home are required to designate one area in the home as the official work station. Telework employees working at home are responsible for ensuring that their work space is safe and in compliance with safety guidelines. An employee who wants a work-at-home arrangement must complete, sign, and provide a copy to their supervisor, a safety checklist (attached) that certifies that the home is safe. Employee must notify their supervisor immediately of any accident or injury at the alternate worksite. In the event of an injury, the supervisor should contact the Human Resources Office for guidance.

Sec. 16. When is this Order effective? This order is effective immediately.

Sec. 17. When does this Order expire? This Order will remain in effect for one year. At the end of the year, a review of the program for continuation will be conducted by the Regional Directorate. This review will consider the effectiveness, consistency, and value of the program.

/sdg/Ralph O. Morgenweck
Regional Director